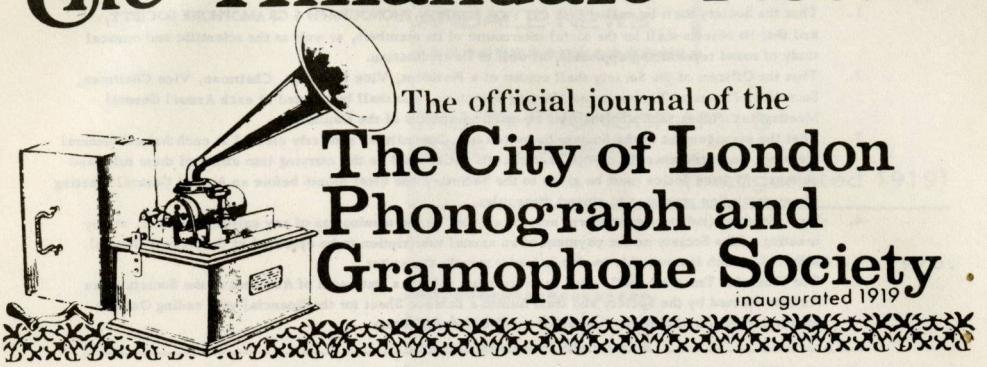


The Hillandale News



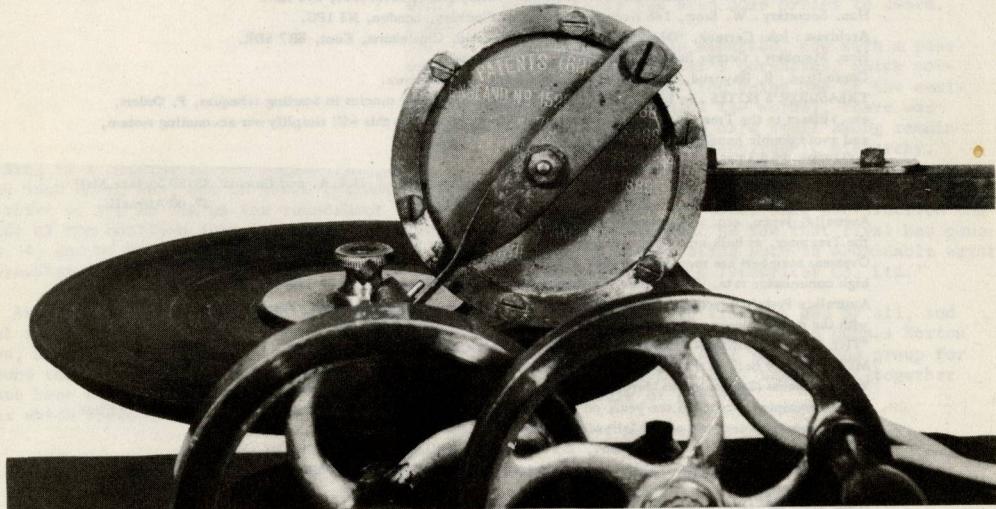
The official journal of the

The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

inaugurated 1919

NO. 85

AUGUST 1975.



Early Berliner hand-driven Gramophone, Detail. Circa 1890

(Christie's, South Kensington August 7 Sale).

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1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON and that its objects shall be the social intercourse of its members and study of sound reproducing apparatus, as well as its application.
2. That the Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Secretary, Financial Treasurer and Meeting Secretary, who shall meet in October, and who shall be ex-officio member.
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee Meeting, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be objects. Written notice must be given to the Secretary of any resolution proposing to amend these rules.
4. New members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the meeting of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription. Meeting, which is renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The Financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit an Auditor elected by the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the inspection of members at each Annual General Meeting.

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HEREFORD Details from the Secretary, D G Watson, [REDACTED] Tupsley, Hereford.

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 THE HILLANDALE NEWS

The Official Journal of

THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH &
 GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

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 CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

On Saturday, June 28th, the Midlands Branch of the C.L.P.G.S. held its second Phono-fair at Denis Norton's museum at Bromsgrove. The Chairman, who had not been to the previous year's event owing to certain matrimonial commitments on the same day, decided he had better try and make this one. Accordingly, Auntie II (i.e. 1960 Rover 80) was given a change of oil and a tickle-up in the points department, as a result of which she refused to start at all at five to nine on Saturday morning. Twenty exasperating minutes later, a small nylon washer was espied hiding in a crevice in the engine, and Aunty was soon under way, but on three cylinders only. A visit to the AA box on the roundabout t'other side of the Dartford Tunnel sorted out cylinder No. 4, and at 10.20 we finally set sail for Worcestershire.

Arriving at Upton Warren at 2.5, lunchless but refuelled, courtesy of ICI at 66p per gallon, *Homo in sede* (if that's the right word) found the car park full and anything that might have been worth buying (like a Seymour soundbox which someone was said to have snapped up)

already sold. He was in time to help in the judging (the judges' exams are very rigorous... remember *Beyond the Fringe*?) of the concours. This was a most enjoyable task, and one only wished there had been more prizes to award.

As the Chairman departed, now with a passenger and the latter's purchases, which covered the back seat (he being one of the early birds who had caught the worms), there was much quaffing of the hard stuff among remaining members of the phonographic hierarchy. These included the Chairman's rival in commerce, which may or may not be significant, but it was with his usual smug satisfaction the following Monday that he saw that rival had gone into print perpetrating such an abominable error as 'The Gramophone & Typewriter Co. Ltd.'

A most enjoyable time was had by all, and our heartfelt thanks must go to Dennis Norton and the organisers from the Midland group for this, the Society's only annual get-together in the middle of England.

 THE GREAT CARUSO ZONOPHONE MYSTERY
 by Leonard Petts

Mr. Frank Andrews, that indefatigable researcher into things 'gramophone' has recently put forward a reasoned argument in favour of the Caruso Light Blue Disco Zonofonos' having been recorded between April 20 1903 and the beginning of June that year. His case was set out in the October 1974 edition of *The Hillandale*

News, and therefore it is not necessary to reiterate it here. Recent research in the EMI archives has brought to light a letter which confirms Mr. Andrews' dating, placing the date of recording within the last ten days of April 1903.

Alfred Clark, at that time the Managing Director of Cie Francaise du Gramophone, in a letter to Barry Owen dated May 5th 1903 writes:

"I understand that Caruso has sung for the Zonophone people. Mr. Michaelis"—Managing Director of The G&T's Italian Company—"while in Paris on his way to London was not sure whether the report was true, but Mr. Prescott confirmed it yesterday, saying that Caruso had sung 8 songs, and that he had paid him a pretty stiff price for them."

Frank Andrews quotes from a letter of approbation written by Caruso to the International Zonophone Company on April 19th in which Caruso states:

"I must confess that your Zonophones are really admirable and they have prevailed upon me to accept your invitation to sing a number of pieces for you."

Mr. Andrews submits that up to the time of the writing of this letter Caruso had not made the Zonophone recordings; this certainly would appear to have been the case. However, during 1903 Alfred Clark for the G&T Company had started the practise of obtaining such letters of approbation from leading artistes, and it seems to have been normal to ask them to write such letters whilst at the studios on the day they had recorded. It, therefore, should not be ruled out that Prescott followed Clark's example and that April 19th was the actual date of the session. The fact that April 19th was a Sunday would not preclude this date as it is definitely known that the date of Caruso's second recording session for the G&T - November 30th 1902 - was also a Sunday. However, if this were the case, it seems likely that the vigilant Michaelis would have been aware of the event before May 5th, which it appears he was not.

From Alfred Clark's letter it is obvious that the Caruso Zonofonos were not on the market by May 5th 1903. However, they were most certainly on sale one month later, for on June 5th 1903 Michaelis sent copies of the *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, and *Elisir d'Amore* discs to London with a comment that these were by far the best of the Caruso Zonofonos.

As every collector knows, only SEVEN Caruso Light Blue Zonophone discs were placed on the market. Who, I wonder, can answer the Great Caruso Zonophone Mystery by supplying the title information for the missing eighth recording?

An interesting sequel to this story occurred

on April 19th 1907 when London's attention was drawn to the fact that the Caruso Zonofonos were still retained on the continental catalogues. London, obviously surprised, replied:

"We are quite sure that these matrices, even if they still exist, have been long ago placed among the dis-used matrices at Hanover. It is quite certain that no records have been pressed from them for some years past."

However, there must have been some doubt in their minds, for the same day they inquired of Hanover if they still retained the old Zonophone Caruso matrices, adding:

"We feel almost sure that you have never pressed any records from Zonophone Caruso Matrices at Hanover."

To this enquiry London received a surprising reply:

"...we beg to inform you that we have, besides our Gramophone Caruso Records 7 Zonophone matrices of which Records were pressed and delivered since we have taken over them to our factory here."

This simple statement covered the fact that 7,497 Light Blue Caruso Zonofono records had been pressed at Hanover from the time the matrices had been taken over in 1903 until March, 1907. The production figures for these records after June 1903 are of such enormous interest to collectors that the actual quantities supplied of each disc are given here: X1550 - 710; X1551 - 650; X1552 - 1369; X1553 - 1486; X1554 - 773; X1555 - 1115; X1556 - 1394.

London wrote to Hanover requesting the number of Caruso Zonophone records pressed since January 1906. Hanover replied, sending the following figures: X1550 - 125; X1551 - 75; X1552 - 185; X1553 - 315; X1554 - 100; X1555 - 120; X1556 - 185, producing a total of 1105 pressed since that date. London was highly displeased to receive this news and immediately requested from Hanover the number of Caruso Zonofonos pressed since January 1907 and the branches receiving them, adding the stern injunction:

"...pending further instructions from us would you please note that we do not wish any more records pressed from the Caruso Zonophone matrices which are to be removed from the active list immediately. We do not wish you to destroy these matrices but merely to lay them on one side..."

Hanover replied that all except X1552 had actually been pressed during the first three months of 1907 and that all records, except for a few copies of X1553 which had been sent to St. Petersburg on February 19th, had been

supplied to the Amsterdam Agency. The last dates of pressing were as follows: X1550, X1551, X1555 - January 11th; X1553, X1556 - January 13th; X1554 - January 21st 1907.

London's letter of May 3rd 1907 brought to an end the active life of the Caruso Light Blue Zonofonos, a much greater life span than may have previously been supposed.

As a footnote, it may be of interest to readers that a whole host of early Light Blue and Orange Label Zonophone artistes were still

retained in the Italian and French catalogues of 1905 and the Dutch List of 1906-07 still included records by Aini Ackte, Magina-Coletti, De Negri, Caruso, Edoardo Castellano, Bendozzi-Garulli; Alice Cucini, Bice Silvestri, Giulietti Wermez, Pol Plancon, and Emma Calve, amongst many others. All of these early discs seem to have vanished from the printed catalogue during 1907; perhaps London suddenly became aware of their existence after the Caruso revelations and ordered that they also should be withdrawn from circulation.

 GRAMOPHONE RECORDS ?
 IT ALL DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU MEAN!
 (or, "An Imaginary Conversation at a Record Bazaar")
 by Frank Andrews

We had never met before that moment when he touched me on the shoulder, "Are you Frank Andrews?"

"Yes", I answered curiously. He was clutching at a batch of disc records. "Have you some disc information for me?" I asked hopefully, eyeing his discs.

"Not that I know of", he replied. "I am hoping that you may have some for me. You see, I have recently been bitten by the 'record collecting bug', but I know nothing of the history of recording and records, and that dealer over there," he pointed vaguely to his left, "told me that you were becoming quite an expert on the subject, and he advised me to have a word with you."

"I don't know about being an expert," I said. "Like you, I became a collector about seven years ago, knowing nothing about the history of recording or what records had been made, and after about two years of collecting 'in the dark', I decided it was about time I began to find out 'what was what', and I gave up actively collecting, and settled down to research the industry myself, there being no English published books on the subject as far as I could discover. Anything I know about the talking machine trade I have found out during the last five years or so."

He began to unwrap his records. "I have bought these this afternoon; I wonder if you could tell me something about these gramophone records?"

I went through his purchases. Deccas, Parlophones, some HMVs, a couple of Columbias and

a dark green Zonophone "Twin", plus, surprisingly, a 7" diam. Gramophone Record, single sided. I looked him straight in the eyes, wondering how he would take it, and said, "There's not a Gramophone Record among the lot of 'em".

He laughed, as if he thought I was 'pulling his leg', but also looked at me a little oddly, as if I were slightly mad.

"From a strictly historical and scientific point of view," I affirmed, "there is not one gramophone record there".

"But these have all been bought and sold as gramophone records," he protested.

"Do you remember a radio programme put out years ago by the BBC called the 'Brains Trust'?" I asked. He nodded.

"Do you remember a Dr. C. E. M. Joad, one of the answering panel, who usually prefaced any answer he made to a question with the observation, 'Well, it all depends on what one means by.....?'" A trained mind, with a scientific and logical approach to any question, he was adept at distinguishing different meanings which could be derived from a simple question. Well, I am taking the same course with you, and in spite of you having bought a disc labelled 'Gramophone Record', from a purely scientific point of view, you do not here have a Gramophone Record at all! Would you like me to explain further?"

He said he would be most interested in what I might have to say.

"Right", I exclaimed, "if you have a few hours to spare, come with me to those seats

and I will try to demonstrate why I consider that none of your afternoon's buys are gramophone records - from a scientific point of view, of course."

After we had sat down and made ourselves comfortable, I began, "Before I can talk about true Gramophone records, I will have to mention two other types of records. Firstly, Edison's Tin-Foil recordings. These were the first recordings ever from which it was possible to reproduce the original sounds, however crudely they may have sounded. They were made on a phonograph, which had a cylindrical drum and not a flat turntable as in the Gramophone of later date. The process of recording was one of indenting, that is to say, the tin foil which received the recording was indented by the recorder, malforming it into depressions and high spots as recording progressed. The cylindrical drum, around which the tin foil was wrapped, had a thread or spiral groove cut into its surface, and this groove was usually filled with a wax. As a recording was made, so the wax beneath the tin foil also received the impressions formed on to the tin foil, but it was the tin foil which was the recording. This method of recording was invented by Edison in 1877, and the resulting machines and tin foil recordings were called 'The Wonder of the Age!'. But this method of recording and reproducing sounds was not adequate enough for commercial exploitation and it was abandoned and Edison allowed his two British patents to lapse - Are you with me so far?"

"Yes, I think so. But Edison never had anything to do with the Gramophone, did he?"

"I would say that Edison, by achieving sound reproduction for the first time, paved the way for others to research the possibilities of sound reproduction, and in that respect, he did have an influence on any further developments which took place. And so I come to the second method of making sound records, and that was the method used for making the discs you have bought today, a method which, scientifically speaking, was not, as I have said, the gramophone method."

"This second method of recording sounds, was the graving, incising, cutting or gouging method. This was the invention, discovery or development, call it what you will, of the Volta Laboratory Associates in America comprising Professor Alexander Graham Bell, his brother Dr. Chichester Alexander Bell and Professor Charles Sumner Tainter, the latter two being the important elements in the new method. They took Edison's tin foil phonograph, dispensed with the foil, and cut directly into the wax which filled the helical groove in the surface of the drum. This they did in 1881. By 1885 they had perfected a method of

making removable wax coated records, upon which they applied for a patent, which was granted them both in England and the U.S.A. on May 4th, 1886."

"But you told me just now that this method was the one used for the disc records I have here and yet you are talking about cylinder records. When did the flat disc come into the story?"

"I'm just coming to that. Both Edison and the Volta Laboratories people, in their patent specifications, described forms of disc recording as well as cylinder and other forms of records, but both parties kept almost exclusively to cylinder recordings. The Volta Laboratories set up a new company called the Volta Graphophone Company, 'The Graphophone' being the name given to their recording and reproducing machines. If you look at the name of the company on the Columbia records you have there you will see that they were made by the Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd, and that word 'Graphophone' is there because the English company of that name could trace its origins back to the Volta Graphophone Company."

"Now the Volta Graphophone Company assigned its Patents to the American Graphophone Company, who manufactured the Graphophones, and at the end of the last century they produced a small disc playing machine, for children, which employed small wax disc records."

"These were the first disc records then?" this new recruit to collecting asked.

"Oh, No!" I replied. "But they were the first disc records offered to the public which had been cut by the method which was generally adopted by the talking machine industry throughout the world after the patents for it had expired."

"Well, when were the first disc records made? I suppose they would be the true gramophone records which you keep on about?"

"That's so," I agreed, "but as to when they were first made for the public, or sold to the public, no one has yet been able to say with certainty. My own estimation is early in 1890. They were 5" diameter single sided discs, they had no labels, and they were manufactured in an area of Germany called Thuringia, in the small town of Waltershausen. If this town has no memorial to this fact, then it should have!"

"If what you say is true, how did it come about that such a place should have the honour of producing the first disc records?"

"I never said that. The first disc records for general sale throughout Europe were made there. The first disc records, the Gramophone Record, were made in Washington, D.C. by the inventor, Emile Berliner, who was a German emigre to America."

"He 'invented' this third method of recording sound, but the word 'invented' is not strictly cor-

rect, because what Berliner really did was to apply known principles into the field of sound recording and reproducing, as an alternative method to Edison's indenting into materials, and Bell and Tainter's method of cutting into waxes or wax like substances. After much experimentation, Berliner finally settled on an acid etching process; metal plates were coated with an acid resisting compound, they were revolved beneath the cutting stylus of a recording machine and the resulting scribed line, which was formed into the compound, revealed the metal which was etched away when the disc was placed in an acid bath. The result was that the etched plate was now a master record which could be reproduced on the reproducing machine invented for the purpose, and which Emile Berliner had called the Gramophone. From these metal masters, a technique was evolved for pressing copies in vulcanised rubber, and it was this type of record which was first marketed in Europe."

"If Berliner was living in the United States, and he developed the Gramophone there, how did it come about that it was in Germany that the discs first appeared and not in the U.S.A.?"

Well, that question floored me! "I do not know why the Americans did not have the discs first, I must admit, but I do know that at the end of 1889, Berliner paid a visit to Germany, and whilst there he licensed a doll making firm (in the town of Waltershausen) called Kämmer und Reinhardt, to manufacture and sell his newly patented processes for making Grammophons (as the Germans called them) and the disc records. Having granted this license at this time, I fail to see how there could have been any disc records about before the new year of 1890!"

"One thing puzzles me," remarked my new acquaintance, "why, if the Bell and Tainter method for recording was so acceptable to the rest of the Talking Machine Industry, as you call it, why did Emile Berliner bother to find another method of recording, which on your say-so, like Edison's method was never used generally?"

"To explain that is not within my knowledge, but it must be remembered that here for the first time in human history, was the possibility of making sound recordings of human beings and the noises they made, which would be available to the human race hundreds and thousands of years later. This was a great attraction to inventive minds, at a time when the great inventions of the Industrial Revolution were coming thick and fast. Berliner was part of this scene in America, he had already contributed towards the development of the telephone and so was interested in inventions based upon the transmission and recording of sounds. At the time Berliner became successful in his experiments, Edison's recording meth-

od had proved too primitive, and the Bell and Tainter method had been patented. If he wished to continue to solve the problems of recording sounds and to put such results at the disposal of the public then another method of recording had to be found. The Gramophone method was his solution."

As I finished speaking there was the sound of breaking disc records. About two yards from us a number of broken records lay scattered about. We arose from our seats and assisted in picking up the pieces. A "G&T" label was among the pieces I fitted together. It was red of course and bore the number 53346!

"Boronat!", said my companion. "Was that of any importance?" I looked up at its very recent owner, who had a sheepish grin on his face. "I don't think so," I said, "unless you must have her on the so-called '78s', then I believe it to be worth quite a few pounds, but there is little doubt that if you are mainly interested in the artist's voice, there will be a long playing transfer about somewhere in the world."

We returned to our seats. "Where was I," I asked.

"You had just explained why you thought Berliner had brought out his Gramophone method of recording. But tell me, if my disc records were cut by the Graphophone method, for how long was the Gramophone method used, and where were such records made, and who made them?"

"There are three questions there. I will answer them one at a time, which will be to the best of my knowledge. In answer to the first question and without being exact about it, I should say that Gramophone Records were manufactured between the years 1890 to about 1901; there was a gradual phasing out of the gramophone record after the Graphophone method became 'public property' on May 5th, 1900."

"All these records were styled 'E. Berliner's Gramophone', or similarly so in other languages. As I have already said, the first ones were made in Waltershausen, in Germany, and were 5" in diameter. The vocal recordings were made in a number of languages for sale throughout Europe, English being one of the languages used. No one seems to know for sure when production ceased at Waltershausen, but I know that stocks of machines and records were still available in England in 1896, although these may have been old stock merchandise."

"An unanswered question about these records has always been who was it who did the pressing of the discs, and the recording of them for that matter."

"Some brilliant research work by Ernie Bayly may be putting us on the way to answering the first question."

"Who is Ernie Bayly?" - I knew by that question that he indeed was new to collecting!

"I'll give you his address later," I promised, "for as a collector, and a new one at that, you will want to know what magazines there are available which will be of interest to your new hobby." (I also gave him details of our Society).

"Ernie Bayly prints and publishes 'The Talking Machine Review,'" I said, "and like me is extremely interested in sorting out the early history of the hobby which gives so many people throughout the world a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction. I cannot disclose what he has discovered as he has not given me permission so to do, but what I can tell you is this. If ever you are lucky enough to be shown, or even acquire, one of the 'E. Berliner's Grammophon' discs made at Waltershausen you might see on the centre of the record the framework of a cross, similar in design to the plus sign. Within this cross are the letters making up the word 'Waltershausen'. This cross does not appear on all the discs, but when it does, between the arms of the cross appear the letters 'K', 'C', 'G', and 'F'. Up to the end of June, 1975, I believe it is true to say that no one has been able to give a satisfactory explanation of these letters. Mr. Bayly and I now believe that they indicate the manufacturer of the discs. More than that I am not prepared to say. Mr. Bayly will make known his discovery in due course."

"Did Berliner never make Gramophone records in America then?"

"Surely, through the Berliner Gramophone Company. 1894 and 1895 are the years most quoted. They were on sale until about June 1900, to the best of my information, their production and sale being brought to an end by a Court action brought by the Graphophone interests. Most of these discs were of 7" diameter but other peculiar sizes are known, such as 5½ inches. By the way I should mention that the Waltershausen discs were on sale in England in vulcanised rubber and similar materials and also, more rarely, as the master metal discs, which cost extra. They were also the first recordings of any type to be sold in a legitimate fashion to the British public. Cylinder recordings were not sold, legitimately, until 1897. But that is another story."

"There was one other company which made Gramophone Records, and that was the Deutsche Grammophon G.m.b.H. of Hannover, Germany, a company which later was reformed as the Deutsche Grammophon A.G. This company, at first, was the manufacture for the Gramophone Company of London, itself later reformed as The Gramophone Company, Limited, and these two companies carried out the recording processes.

Reformed again later, as The Gramophone and Typewriter, Ltd., I doubt very much whether they recorded by the Gramophone method; they used the Graphophone method of recording into wax. One thing I do not know, is whether the Gramophone Company Limited ever made 'E. Berliner's Gramophone' discs by the Graphophone method, although there is every indication that they did. Thus even discs styled 'E. Berliner's Gramophone' are not necessarily records made by the Gramophone method!"

"Is that the history of the 'Gramophone Record' then?"

"From a purely scientific point of view, that is it in a nutshell, but of course, as you and I are quite aware, here in England practically all disc records are referred to as Gramophone Records, and this arose because the first disc company here was The Gramophone Company, the first machines on public sale were Gramophones and all subsequent makes of disc records could be played on a Gramophone, some types of disc needing special soundboxes, it is true, such as the Neophones and the Pathes."

"But things were not all that simple at first, because, once rival discs appeared on the market, such as the Zon-o-phone Record, the Vitanophone Record, The Climax Record, The Columbia Disc Record, The Nicole and Neophone Records and the Odeon and Beka Records, The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. began operating a policy of compelling the manufacturers, dealers and public to refer specifically only to their products as Gramophone Merchandise, which is why the makes I have just mentioned never contained the word 'Gramophone' in their label styles. But by word of mouth, all machines of the disc playing variety and the various makes of records were invariably referred to as Gramophones or gramophone records. The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. by the end of 1903 had three styles of record on the market, the 7" Gramophone Record, an example of which you have bought today, the 10" diam. Gramophone 'Concert' Record, and the 12" diam. Gramophone 'Monarch' Record. However there came the day when a British judge ruled that the word 'Gramophone' could be used generally, and was not to be the prerogative of the Gramophone Company, and it has been in common usage ever since."

"In the United States, things went differently, and there all types of records are generally referred to as phonograph records, although they too were made by the Graphophone method; the phonograph method was never used again after the demise of the tin-foil phonograph but the name has stuck to recordings."

"Now can you tell me anything about these discs I have bought today?"

"Yes, accepting that we will now refer to them as Gramophone Records, as is generally done, your records can be divided into two main groups, acoustic and electrical recordings. Acoustical recordings were made by performers in front of horns or trumpets which gathered the sound and mechanically vibrated the diaphragms carrying the cutting stylus. This method of recording began disappearing from 1925 through to 1927, according to which company is referred to, and the electrical method of using a microphone to generate electrical impulses which were then transformed into mechanical movements at the cutting heads of the recording machines took its place, blank wax discs still being used as the recording medium. After the last war, around about 1948/49, the process of making master tape recordings, before making disc masters from the master tapes, was gradually introduced into the recording studios. I know nothing about this period, but I am very anxious to know when the major companies ceased to record on discs directly."

"Now your 7" 'Gramophone Record' was acoustically recorded. You will not find any of those recorded electrically, nor any of the 'Concert' or 'Monarch' sizes, but when you come to the succeeding 'His Master's Voice' records, then you are liable to pick up both electrical and acoustically made recordings. The same applies to Columbia, Regal, Parlophone, Aco, Actuelle, Vocalion, Velvet Face, Winner, Imperial and Zonophone. Some Regal-Zonophones too can be

found pressed from matrices made in the acoustic days of the industry, but retained in the catalogues of the two major companies, Columbia and the Gramophone Co. Ltd., which merged to make E.M.I. Ltd."

"The later discs made by the Master tape recording method, I know nothing about; they do not interest me, except those that have been made at actual public performances, when one can be reasonably sure that a continuous performance has been recorded. For me the record is a communication between the performer and me, the recipient, and is a personal contact. With the modern records, which are nothing more than 'endisced edited tapes', this aspect has gone, and as performances, are invalid of consideration as gramophone records; transfers of 78s to the much more modern longplaying records, achieved by master tapes, I except!"

"Now I must be going, but I will just quickly tell you the year in which your purchases were first issued. I am no authority on artists, so cannot help you there, but there are plenty of collectors about who are well up on that aspect of record collecting and are always glad to assist."

With that, I pulled out my rough guide to records issued up to the December of each year, from 1906 to 1939, and gave him an approximation of when his discs had first appeared. He thanked me and I left, but it was not my meeting with him that filled my thoughts on the way home. No, I just could not help feeling sorry for the fellow who had dropped the Boronat!

JUNE MEETING, 1975

REPORT by LONDON CORRESPONDENT

The meeting at the "John Snow" on the 10th June was the second in the Society's 57th year of its existence and was devoted to a lecture (illustrated with a number of coloured transparencies of record labels and the demonstration of a number of disc records) entitled "The Invasion of the British Market by the German Disc Record Industry, 1905 to 1914". Our demonstrator and lecturer was Committee Member Frank Andrews, ably assisted at the projector by his friend, Mr. Peter Morgan (the gentleman who took the photographs of the Reid's Stout Advertisement, showing Nipper, the dog in the 'His Master's Voice' advertisement, which photographs were included in fellow-member Ernie Bayly's publication, 'The Story of Nipper & His Master's Voice Painting').

We were favoured with two visitors from overseas, Mr. Larry Dupon of Chicago and Mr. Nagasawa from Japan, who evinced a great interest in the early 5" and 7" diams. 'E. Berliner Gramophone' discs, three of the early German type of 1890 onwards being on display, they, that week, having been 'junked' by a London member!

Frank began his lecture by reviewing the Talking Machine industry in Britain as it had developed from 1890, when the Gramophone was put on sale, it being the only machine to be legitimately on sale at that time, he told us, the Edison Improved phonographs being only available on hire. It seems that by 1894/5, the phonographs and graphophones, either legally or illegally, had found their way into exhibitors and showmen's

hands, leading to the eclipse of the gramophone, which had been readily available. With all phonograph and graphophone patents in the hands of Edison Bell, that company had little to fear from the hand operated gramophone with its 5" discs. But with the coming of the American built Berliner gramophones and records, as a small trickle in 1896, and with the improved spring driven machines and 7" records of 1897, the Edison Bell monopoly was challenged for a second time by the gramophone whose records were made by a method which did not infringe on Edison Bell's patents. Frank then gave it as his opinion that the reason Edison Bell licensed Hough's London Phonograph Company to actually sell small phonographs and graphophones, was directly due to the sale of the improved Gramophone and records arriving, for which no licences or royalties need be obtained or paid. From this point on our lecturer mentioned the coming of the American Zonophones, the American disc graphophones from Columbia, the establishment of the Nicole Record Co. Ltd. and the arrival of the Neophone Company from Germany plus the sale in 1904 (February) of the first of the Odeon Records from the International Talking Machine Company of Berlin, which Frank did not consider as a purely German invasion of the English market.

We were then given a short resume of the German Talking Machine Industry up to its stage of development at the end of 1904, with particular emphasis on the Bumb & Koenig, and the Carl Lindström Companies.

From this point onwards, early 1905, Frank took us through not only the succession of German manufactured discs which found an outlet here in Britain, beginning with the Beka Records of seven different types, late in 1905, but also gave a comprehensive survey of the labels which appeared, and the companies which were founded, in Germany from that time on until the outbreak of the first World War on August 4th, 1914.

As each "invading label" was recounted as having arrived in Britain, we were shown examples of such labels on the screen, and in many cases, recordings were played over at the same time, or partially played over to save time.

Many of the purely German marketed labels and the companies responsible for their sale and/or manufacture, were often quite new names to many of those present at this well attended meeting, but of course we were more familiar with those that arrived here and of which it is still possible to collect examples today.

Even so, there were still a number of British marketed labels that were "new brands" to some of us present simply because they are very rarely found, and in some cases, it would appear are never found today; such records as "I. S. I.",

Globos Record, Lyrophon Record, with an English repertoire, Hymnophon Record, Derby Record, Turmaphon Record, Diamond Record (not Edison's Diamond Re-Creation discs, nor the Diamond Double Disc which eventually went to Pathé, but a German made lateral cut disc made at the Turmalin Derby-Fabrik Werke, G.m.b.H.). Other rarely seen records nowadays which were mentioned were Aga Record, Bel Canto Record, Invicta Record, the German made ones, not the "Crystalates", Rubin Record, Melograph Record and Applaudando Record, among others.

Another notable feature about Frank's lecture was that, for the first time, I should say, many of us were made aware of the roster of artistes which were contained in the initial British catalogues of the Beka Record Company, The International Favorite Disc Record Coy., and the Homophone Company, G.m.b.H., for he read out to us the complete listing of artistes from each. The number of internationally famous Opera singers was really astounding, and I have been made aware that many of these artistes' recordings have not yet found their way into "Baer", although they were in these current catalogues of 1905 and 1906.

As the story unfolded, which took two hours to tell, we became aware of the immense size of the Talking Machine Industry in Germany, without any doubt the leading country in the business in the world at that time, the American Industry being mostly tied down to the Big Three, Victor, Columbia, and Edison, both by agreements and patent rights, for most of this period of 1905 to 1914. Here in Britain, at the outbreak of war, we had the following manufactures, The Columbia Graphophone Coy., at Wandsworth, the Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd. at Golden Green, Tonbridge, Kent, the Edison Bell Works at Peckham, The Fonotipia Ltd./Carl Lindström Works at Hertford, and the Gramophone Company Ltd.'s Hayes Factory, which also housed their British Zono-phonie Coy. Ltd.'s works.

After a Jumbo Record, introducing the evening's lecture with a song entitled "The Germans Are Coming, So They Say", the following label examples were demonstrated:- Beka Grand Record; Anker Record; Favorite Record (Black); Homophone Record; Melograph Record; Polyphon Record; Encore Record; Rubin Record; Dacapo Record; Klingsor Record; Beka Meister Record; Bel Canto Record; Aga Record; Favorite (Royal Blue) Record, 12"; Diploma Record; Invicta Record; Scala Record De Luxe; Operaphone Record; Homochord; The Stars' Record; Kalliope Record and Arrow Record, the last being a very clear rendering of "Redwing" sung by Stanley Kirkby, whose voice took wonderfully well to

the acoustic recording horns.

A most informative and enjoyable evening, if a little somewhat undigestible with such a plethora of facts, but we were made aware of the fact that there is more to the record world than just HMVs, Berliners, Columbias, Odeons and Fonotipias.

After some complimentary remarks by the

Chairman, Mr. Christopher Proudfoot, referring to Frank Andrews' research activities and the privilege the members had of sharing in the results through such programmes, our lecturer was given the usual round of applause in appreciation, with another to Mr. Peter Morgan who so ably projected the transparencies.

"AS A MATTER OF FACT"
by FRANK ANDREWS

With the current research and compilations now being undertaken on early Columbia recording activities, both here in England, and by fellow members in the U.S.A., we will occasionally be calling on the assistance of members as regards to matrice numbers and "blank entries", etc. At the present time though, I am trying to establish exactly when the label style "Columbia Record" was changed to simply "Columbia". I think this took place some time in 1922. The highest known-to-me "Columbia Record" in the 10" size is 2985 of December, 1920, the highest in that month being 2995. The 12" "Columbia Record" numbers had reached 842. Have you any discs styled "Columbia Record" with numbers higher than these? The trade periodicals, as far as I can discover, never made mention of the change in style to

"Columbia". Disc advertisements had been referring to the discs simply as "Columbia" long before the style was changed, so there is no assistance there. Has anyone the 4 disc set of Selections from the "Lady of the Rose" issued on green labelled Columbias or Columbia Records in June 1922? Are your labels of the "Starlight Green" variety or are they a "solid" green? If you have the "starlight" background will you please let me know? (The records are 12" D/Sided f. 1078 to F. 1081) if "Columbia Records"?

Please send all information to me at [REDACTED], N.W.10.

A big "thank you" for Columbia 9,000 information to Paul Charosh and Bill Bryant, both in USA.

THE BRITISH MUSIC HALL ON RECORD
(A Survey and an Appeal)
by Phil Hobson

The British Music Hall was really a development of the earlier 'Song-and-Supper' Rooms and the like and started in 1851 with the opening of the Canterbury Hall (in Westminster Bridge Road, London) by Charles Morton. From then on, the Halls mushroomed all over the country, going through various phases in just over sixty years, when their popularity began to wane. This was mainly due to rivalry from Revue and Moving Pictures, about the time of the first World War. Thereafter, many of the Halls went over to films or continued as Variety Theatres, but the true British Music Hall was dead and gone by the end of the 1950s - a life of about one hundred years. During those years, there were many

artists who pleased the public and left memories, songs - and some even made records! These precious links with a completely vanished era have not been given their dues either biographically or discographically.

It is with this in mind and with the hope of contacting other interested collectors, that I have penned the following sketches which are the result of my interest in the artists, their careers, their records and my insatiable curiosity as to who recorded and who didn't. I have gathered 'under one roof' all the information available to me and invite anyone interested to add to it by giving missing career and/or recording details and other pertinent data - I hope to give all com-

ments received when the series is at an end.

Careerwise, there is surprisingly little written, apart from the very big stars. The records fare little better, for apart from the 'Voices of the Past' English lists, which, so far, only cover THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY and some COLUMBIA records, the Society's EDISON and EDISON BELL cylinder lists, the WINNER lists of Ernie Bayly and one or two catalogue reprints, this information is very incomplete, as quite a lot of artists chose those companies which have not yet been documented - BEKA, FAVORITE, etc. and even some very obscure ones like SOUNDWAVE, POPULAR or SILVERTONE. One point to narrow it down, practically all artists (save one or two 'top-notchers' like HARRY LAUDER in USA and HARRY FRAGSON in France) recorded only in Britain and if they didn't here, they didn't anywhere.

Another point - when I started collecting, I automatically thought that every Music Hall artist must, at some time or another, have recorded all their 'big numbers', but sadly, this is not the case and so we do not have (for instance) DAISY DORMER singing "Little Wooden Hut", VICTORIA MONKS' "Bill Bailey" or "Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road" as performed by its creator, ALBERT CHEVALIER. (By the way, if someone can tell me that these statements are wrong, I shall be delighted). It seems that many of the early stars were reluctant to commit their best songs to wax, thinking that if they could be heard on the Phonograph or Gramophone, the public would not pay to see them in person.

I have been careful to mention songs 'created' by certain people and it would be nice if they had recorded all these, but very often they didn't - if only LP had been invented seventy years ago! - so 'cover versions' by others (usually recording company artists like HARRY FAY, JACK CHARMAN or HARRY BLUFF) are important as contemporary accounts. However, I think this type of performer would be out of place among the 'originals'.

Now to two other classes of people I must omit. Firstly, those whose careers were over before recording commenced commercially and we can safely say never made records - GEORGE LEY-BOURNE, HARRY CLIFTON, ALFRED VANCE, NELLIE POWER, etc. Secondly, I have left out those later performers like LUCAN and McSHANE, ROBB WILTON and NORMAN LONG, whose records are well documented.

As for my descriptions of their styles, I must state here that I write as someone who has only seen a few of them in person and therefore my judgements must be made mainly on their recordings and from other people's writings, admittedly

unsatisfactory methods for summing up their achievements. Of course, everyone has 'un-favourites', but I have tried to be fair to mine (they include GEORGE FORMBY Senior and HARRY LAUDER) and if they are favourites of yours, don't worry - you probably don't share my enthusiasm for GUS ELEN or VESTA TILLEY!

So, to sum up, this is a survey and, of necessity, an appeal, for with *your* help I hope, some day, to write the definitive book on the subject, with the most complete discography possible. There must be many recordings that are completely unknown except to the lucky owner - *you* may have that 'missing link' in your collection. Most recordings noted are commercial, although there seem to be quite a number of 'private' recordings (the BBC must have many) and if you have any information on anything of this nature, please let us have it. All comments should be sent to me, c/o "The Hillendale News".

I will mention here one or two books which might be useful to the beginner with an interest in this field:-

'YOUR OWN, YOUR VERY OWN!', compiled by PETER GAMMOND (published by Ian Allan, 1971) - a good general account, with many pictures.

'THEY WERE SINGING!' by CHRISTOPHER PULLING (published by Harrap, 1952) - a social history of Music Hall times, told through the songs - very well done.

'THE EARLY DOORS' by HAROLD SCOTT (published by Nicholson and Watson, 1946) - a very full history of the early Music Hall.

I would like to end this preamble on a personal note and thank two very kind people who have helped me - firstly, Douglas White of Portsmouth, who was my mentor on the subject when I was building my collection and, of course, my good friend Bert Langdon of London, a mine of information on Music Hall and many other musical highways and byways.

Let's start with a list of artists who could have recorded, but of whom, at the present moment, no discs or cylinders are known to me - have you ever seen or heard of any? - I am also short of career details.

ARTHUR AISTON	MAY HENDERSON
T.W. BARRETT	ALICE HOLLANDER
LEONARD BARRY	MILLIE HYLTON
GEORGE BEAUCHAMP	DAISY JAMES
LILY BURNAND	DAISY JEROME
ADA CERITO	WALTER LABURNAM
ALF CHESTER	KATIE LAWRENCE
CHARLES COHEN	LILY LENA
LOTTIE COLLINS	FANNY LESLIE
JOHNNY DANVERS	MADGE LESSING
MAGGIE DUGGAN	CARLOTTA LEVEY

ROSIE EATON
SABLE FERN
FLORRIE GALLIMORE
CHARLES GODFREY
WILL GODWIN
ROSE HAMILTON
J. C. HEFFRON

RACHEL LOWE
WALTER MUNROE
PEGGY PRYDE
IDA RENE
FLORRIE ROBINA
JACK SMILES
HARRIET VERNON
DAISY WOOD

Now here is the main alphabetical list:-
BEN ALBERT (1876 - ?)

Popular comedian who made his first appearance in 1892, becoming a music hall favourite, also in many London pantos. Many of his songs were of the topical type, or parodies on then popular songs like "Goodbye, Dolly Gray!!" My favourite record of his is "Sollomon" - a Jewish character number (JUMBO). He also recorded much patter and sketches, and these have not worn too well. Records for G&T, ZONO, JUMBO, BEKA, FAVORITE, JOHN BULL, LYRIC, EDISON cyls., STERLING cyls., some issued under the names ALFRID BENSON or ALBERT BENN. Further details of his career would be useful.

HARRY ANDERSON (? - ?)

A singer of convivial songs', of which "Beer, Beer, Glorious Beer" was once famous. Only recordings of him I know are four G&Ts. Details of career and further recordings (if any), please!

CHARLES AUSTIN (1878 - 1944)

Comedian, a Londoner, who after appearing with the Fred Karno troupe, made his name as a 'Sketch Artist!', his 'Parker' character being well known. Recordings for COLUMBIA, REGAL, HOMOCHORD, WINNER, GRAFTON (and probably others).

LAWRENCE BARCLAY (? - ?)

A minor music hall artist and popular song composer, who was the uncle of Vesta Victoria, for whom he wrote some songs. Three EDISON BELL 2 min. cyls, one G&T, and one ZONO-PHONE are listed.

WILKIE BARD (1874 - 1944)

His first appearance was in 1895. Starting as a coster singer, he soon became known as an excellent comedian on the halls and was also a good panto dame. His songs included tongue-twisters like "She sells sea shells" (did he record a full version of this?), songs in drag, such as "I want to sing in Opera" (this also exploited what was known as the "interrupted turn") (JUMBO, ARIEL, SCALA), ditties knocking the female sex - "Put me on an island" (ZONOPHONE, JUMBO) and character studies ("The Policeman" - JUMBO, etc.). A good idea of his style can be formed by listening to his electrically-recorded medley on HMV. Recordings for G&T, GRAM. CO., ZONO, BEKA, JUMBO, SCALA, COLISEUM, ARIEL.

BILLIE BARLOW (1865 - 1937)

Enter the ladies! Although born in London, her first appearances were in Gilbert & Sullivan operettas, and she didn't graduate to the halls until 1888. One of her successes was "See me dance the Polka". There are three of her recordings listed for G&T.

FRED BARNES (1884 - 1938)

Birmingham born, first went on the boards in 1907. His earlier successes were in the 'Ragtime' idiom, songs such as "The Ragtime Violin". He later became something of a "matinee idol" and very popular as a 'character and comedy vocalist' with songs like "The Black Sheep of the Family" (this was recorded on REGAL - does anyone know the number?) (also on WORLD FAVOURITES). Details of any of his other recordings would be welcome. Fred Barnes is also remembered as the original singer of "On Mother Kelly's Doorstep" but this was really brought to popularity by Randolph Sutton.

IDA BARR (1882 - 1968)

A well-loved chorus singer from 1908 onwards, who only recorded (as far as I know) at the age of 79 in 1961 (FONTANA L.P.).

GEORGE BASTOW (1872 - 1914)

I am short on details of career of this popular artist, known for his character studies of military men ("The Galloping Major" - did he record this?) and "Captain Ginjah" (COLUMBIA, REGAL), and Rustic impressions ("Mary Ann, she's after me!!" - COLUMBIA, SOUNDWAVE). There were also five EDISON BELL 2 min. cyls. and one 7" G&T.

HARRY BEDFORD (1873 - 1939)

Known as the singer of "A little bit off the top" (there is a sound film of him doing this), a song he sang on the halls for over twenty years. He was also a song writer. Two sides for JUMBO are known.

BILLY BENNETT (? - 1942)

Graduating from the Fred Karno Company, he became known for his burlesque monologues ("Almost a Gentleman"). His recordings of the 1920s and 1930s for COLUMBIA, REGAL & REX are well-known, my favourite being "Ogil-Mogul" (COLUMBIA, REGAL). His type of comedy is now somewhat faded, I think.

CHARLES BIGNELL (? - ?)

Another comedian of the 1890s. His only known recording is one side of TWIN (333).

HERBERT CAMPBELL (1844 - 1904)

Really big, in figure as well as fame, he made his start as a 'black-faced' act in the late 1860s, then became famous as a comic singer and dame (Drury Lane Panto, for 23 years), and as a partner of the great Dan Leno. His four records for G&T are rare, but not non-existent.

GEORGE CARNEY (1887 - 1947)

A "Sketch Artist", who also appeared in films, Records for COLUMBIA and REGAL.

KATE CARNEY (1869 - 1950)

A beloved singer of 'Coster' numbers, she had her first success as a singer of Irish songs, but after her first 'Coster' hit, in 1893, she went on to become the favourite female interpreter of these ditties, with a string of successes like "Are we to part like this, Bill?" (ECLIPSE), "Three Pots a Shilling" and "Liza Johnson" (G&T). Her style has little subtlety, and her vibrant voice has a hint of aggressiveness - one feels that Bill must have been a very brave man! Recordings known are four for G&T (recorded in 1903), two electric sides for ECLIPSE, and five early cylinders for PATHE (50151-5) - can anyone supply the titles of these?

MORNY CASH (- 1938)

Born in Manchester, he made his debut in the late 1890s, and became a popular turn for about twenty years, being known as 'The Lancashire Lad'. He has many good songs, but doesn't seem to have recorded the best of the lot - "I Live in Trafalgar Square". However, a good idea of his humour can be obtained by listening to (say) "Hooray, I'm going to get married today" (WINNER, JUMBO) or "I will have a night tonight!" (WINNER, FAVORITE). Although similar to George Formby, Sr. and Jack Pleasants, he had a more vigorous style than either and my preference is for Morny Cash, who recorded for SCALA, JUMBO, WINNER, FAVORITE, EDISON 2 min. cyls. and probably other makes.

HARRY CHAMPION (1866 - 1942)

Every collector surely knows this artist, whose records are still in great demand. Strangely enough, his first appearance, in 1888, was as a Negro Comedian! However, he soon became known for his quick-fire Cockney patter songs and continued to sing them for over fifty years, until the year of his death. A prolific recorder in the early days, many of his songs were done in several versions for different companies, including ZONO, COLUMBIA, REGAL, BEKA, BEL CANTO, LYRIC, COLISEUM, JOHN BULL, ARIEL, WINNER, ARROW, OPERAPHONE, FAVORITE, LYCEUM, JUMBO, EDISON 2 min. and EDISON BELL cyls. (probably others!). There were two electrics, a wonderful medley on COLUMBIA and two songs for REGAL-ZONO-PHONE (one is "Any Old Iron"). Of his many songs, most people still know "What a Mouth!", "Henry the Eighth" and "Boiled Beef and Carrots".

ALBERT CHEVALIER (1861 - 1923)

A very big star, known to everyone, he originally began as an actor in 1877. After starting to write his own songs, in collaboration with his brother-in-law Charles Ingle, he made his first Music Hall appearance in 1891 and immediately became popular with Coster songs such as "The Future Mrs. 'Awkins", "Our Little Nipper", the much maligned "My Old Dutch" (all recorded) and "Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road", which he doesn't appear to have committed to wax. He also did impressions of 'Country Yokels', Dramatic Monologues, etc. and appeared in Musical Comedy and Melodrama. Although always thought superior to Gus Elen by the general public, the latter artist will always be the favourite with record collectors, I think. Nevertheless, Chevalier's discs are well worth acquiring. He seems only to have recorded for the GRAM. CO. for which he made a total of twelve sides.

G.H. CHIRGWIN (1854 - 1922)

Known as 'The White-Eyed Kaffir', he came to the Music Hall from the 'Nigger Minstrels'. Beginning as a member of a family troupe in 1861, he graduated to the Halls in 1878. Although he had many songs, the two which the public always demanded (and got) were "My Fiddle is My Sweetheart" and "The Blind Boy" (both recorded). His high-pitched voice and one-string fiddle playing are not the kind of thing to appeal to folks today, but his recordings are treasurable as the last links with a completely vanished style. He made twelve recordings for EDISON BELL cyls. and four sides for WINNER and certain others are on STANDARD and PELICAN - were these the same as the WINNERS, or different recordings?

ALBERT CHRISTIAN (- 1915)

Only known to me as the original singer of Leslie Stuart's song "The Soldiers of the Queen", which is one of the two sides he made for BERLINER in 1899 and in which he was probably accompanied by the composer - it would be nice to know that copies still exist. Details of his career would also be useful.

TOM CLARE (1876 - 1947)

Starting with the "Mohawk Minstrels" at the age of eight and beginning his Music Hall career in 1900, he later became well-known as an 'Entertainer at the Piano', with many songs and monologues. His first recordings, I think, were for STERLING cyls., then many more for HMV and COLUMBIA. "Cohen Rings Up His Tailor" (HMV) was once famous.

AMY CLEVERE (? - ?)

A popular 'Serio-Comic' singer. I need details of her career. The only recordings traced are two on EDISON BELL cyls. and two on single-sided ZONO.

CHARLES COBORN (1852 - 1945)

Although born in Scotland, Coborn made his career down south, his first appearance (as an Irish comedian) was in 1871. He made his name in the 1880s, with Coster songs like "Bill Slogans" (ZONO), following these with the undying "Two Lovely Black Eyes" and "The Man Who Broke The Bank at Monte Carlo" and over the years he made many recordings of these, in fact, he sang them for about sixty years, still going strong almost up to the day of his death.

Known sometimes as 'The Last of the Lions Comiques', that just about describes his style - little subtlety, but plenty of 'gusto'. Recordings for EDISON 2 min. cyls., COLUMBIA cyls., EDISON BELL cyls., PATHE cyls., G&T, WINNER, ACO, BELTONA (all acoustic), electric recordings for COLUMBIA, REGAL, ZONO, REX (probably others).

MARGARET COOPER (? - ?)

Originally a concert singer (she had studied with Henry Wood) and firstly on the legitimate stage and in concert party, she came to the Music Halls in 1906, singing to her own piano accompaniment.

(to be continued).

RESTORATION - SOME FURTHER THOUGHTS

by C. Proudfoot

Since I wrote on this subject a month or two back, I have discovered that HMV (and Columbia) were apparently pioneers in the use of cellulose as a cabinet finish. The earliest model on which I have so far identified this substance is a 510 (Pleated Diaphragm), introduced in 1924. I cannot say whether mine is an early or late example, but it certainly seems that cellulose was being used on most if not all HMV cabinets by 1926. The coating is quite thin on oak cases, but on mahogany it is as thick as the earlier French polish, and is subject to similar failings, only more so.

The crazing in shellac tends to develop downwards from the surface, forming in effect a series of mounds with valleys in between, like crocodile skin:

At the base of the valleys, there is usually still a thin layer of polish on the wood. Cellulose simply cracks right through its thickness, without any dimensional change in the surface, like crazing in the glaze on porcelain: Being sprayed rather than rubbed laboriously into the wood, its adhesion is very inferior, and the crazing is followed by the particles lifting from the wood, becoming opaque and straw-coloured in the process, and eventually falling

out altogether. The polish then looks like Lilliputian crazy paving with some of the stones missing.

I cannot tell you how to deal with crazed cellulose yet, as I am still experimenting. Clearly, cellulose thinners will play an important part, being equivalent to the meths used with shellac. Brushing this on, I have found, will re-attach flaking cellulose to the wood but will not permanently remove the discolouration. Nor, of course, will it fill gaps where flakes of polish have fallen out. I fear that the only answer here is to strip and repolish. When the cellulose is already flaking off, it is usually easiest to scrape it off dry, using a not very sharp tool, since the absence of lubricant in the form of softened polish means there is a greater tendency for the blade to dig in. Otherwise, cellulose thinners can be used to soften the polish for stripping, and it is important to remove the softened cellulose quickly, before it re-hardens and becomes more firmly attached to the wood than it was before.

If you have a spray-gun, and are skilled in its use, then the problem of repolishing is obviously quite simple: you respray with several coats of cellulose for an authentic restoration. If

not, the next choice would be traditional French polish, which is better than cellulose, anyway. A possible alternative, which I have not tried in restoration work, is polyurethane. This is, after all, the present day equivalent of cellulose in wood-finishing, and it is possible to produce a very respectable finish by applying it in thin coats, finely sanded when hard, from a pad rather than a brush. Members familiar with my reconstructed Clifophone will have seen, probably without realising it, what can be done with Polyurethane.

Let us now take a look at the 'works'. The most frequent task in gramophone overhauling is that of cleaning the mainspring. In the case of HMV machines, nearly everyone that turns up is in urgent need of cleaning because the particular type of graphited grease used by the Gramophone Co. goes hard and dry with age, especially after a long period of non-use, and even the powerful 1½-in. spring motors are often so gummed up as to be incapable of playing a record right through. If they can, it will nevertheless be to the accompaniment of frequent bumps as the spring releases itself, which will mar the reproduction and lead sooner or later to fracture.

To clean the springs, it is essential to remove them from the barrel. In motors with a horizontal spring axis, it is usually fairly simple to remove the barrel(s) from the chassis by first removing one or two grub-screws (usually hidden under a lump of old grease) and tapping out the centre arbor. In the vertical axis type of motor, it is sometimes necessary to remove the base-plate first: in others, such as the HMV 59, 69 and 470 series, the fixed spring arbor is held at each end by a screw the removal of which will leave the spring barrel free to be withdrawn from the motor frame without disturbing the other wheels. **N.B. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO RUN THE SPRING RIGHT DOWN BEFORE REMOVING IT FROM THE MOTOR.**

Barrel-covers are fitted in various ways, but the method of removal is usually self-evident. Early 'snap-in' covers can often be started by bringing the barrel hard down on the bench so that the sharp blow on the arbor forces the cover out of its seating.

The easiest way to remove the spring from the barrel if you are new to this potentially hazardous task is by covering the barrel with a large cloth big enough for the spring to expand into as you pull it out from the centre, gripping it through the cloth. I suggest you start off with a small spring, which is less difficult to control. Once you acquire the knack of spring-handling, it is simpler just to unwind it from the barrel, which is better for the spring anyway. Paraffin or petrol can be used as a solvent for old grease, but in the case of hardened HMV graphite, steel-wool is essential, preferably in the form of a pan-scourer which is less likely to leave fragments of itself in the centre coils of the spring. Dip the steel-wool in paraffin, which acts more as a lubricant than a solvent in this case, and scrub the spring lengthwise until all the old gunge is removed. (Your hands will be ingrained with graphite for the next week, by the way). Clean the inside of the barrel in a similar fashion, place a generous dollop of new grease (preferably graphited, you can get it at Halfords) in the bottom, and you are ready to start winding the spring in again. Make sure it is the right way round: if in doubt, place the winding arbor in its position in the motor and see which way the hook points. Now slip the outer end of the spring over the hook or rivet in the barrel casing and hold it there with your left thumb as you turn the barrel round with the rest of your left hand and start feeding the spring in with your right. Once the first coil is in, the left thumb is used to keep it, and each coil in turn, in the barrel. Keep on turning and gradually winding the spring in until the last few coils slip in by themselves. Two points to watch: if any of the coils are not lying flush, they must be tapped down, but it is very important to use a block of wood under the hammer, as any blow from a steel implement could leave a nick in the edge of the spring which would eventually lead to fracture. For the same reason, it is important not to let the coils catch on top of each other as you wind them in.

Before replacing the cover, check that the arbor engages properly with the inner end of the spring, especially if it is

the hook-and-eye type. Place some more grease on top of the spring, refit the cover and slip the arbor into place, making sure that it engages the spring.

The spring is now ready to be replaced in the motor, assuming that the latter has already been cleaned and lubricated as necessary.

WANTED URGENTLY

EDISON AMBEROL - LEO SLEZAK - OTELLO "NIUM MI TEMA" B153
or 40003 - ALSO B150, B156 and B158 - VERY GOOD SWAPS OFFERED.

BILL BROTT - HON. SEC. - [REDACTED]

ANY COLLECTOR OF MILITARY BAND MUSIC IS INVITED TO CORRESPOND WITH
FREDERICK P. WILLIAMS, of [REDACTED] PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA,
19118.

A G M WILL BE HELD AT THE "JOHN SNOW" ON OCTOBER 11th
at 7 O'CLOCK. AGENDA: MINUTES OF LAST AGM, MATTERS
ARISING, CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, TREASURER'S REPORT, AUDITOR'S
REPORT, ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE, SUBSCRIPTION
RATES, ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

***** SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH MEETINGS *****

The fourth meeting of the South-Eastern Branch of the Society took place on June 6th. Our chairman, Christopher Proudfoot, very kindly opened the doors of his house in the wilds of Meopham in Kent. Apart from myself, the presence of Messrs. Frow, Thorne, Ive and Bussey was greatly welcomed.

In the front downstairs room Christopher showed us his magnificent array of cabinet grands, on some of which he'd spent many laborious hours cleaning and renovating. After several cans of beer, we all went to the dining-room. Among the general furniture and several shelves of books we found a Spring Motor Phonograph, an Amberola III and a Diamond Disc machine, looking as good as new, on which we heard the voice of Zenatello.

We were then escorted upstairs to what should have been a bedroom. Here the collection of table models is stored. Two of the internal horn variety that spring to mind are the HMV model VIII in light oak, 1913, and the

Vesper, a machine of about 1920 using the Seymour soundbox and tone-arm. Christopher's collection of accessories also deserves mention; his needle-tins and cleaning pads are the best I've seen. His collection of portables numbers around fifty, mainly HMV, of course, and he showed us one of the last HMV acoustic machines, a portable covered in red cloth, which he was given brand new in 1957.

He also showed us his shed at the bottom of the garden, which he naturally uses as a workshop and which has an upper floor re-boarded out of wood from packing-cases thrown out by Christie's.

After further chat and more beer, the evening came to an end for me as I had to catch the last train home. We all wish Christopher every success in the extension of his collection in the future, and thank him for an enjoyable evening.

Timothy Massey.

The fifth meeting of the South-Eastern branch was held on July 4th in the pavilion of the Chipstead cricket club. For this excellent venue, where they sell real beer out of a barrel, we have to thank Goodwin Ives. Roger Thorne had agreed to give us a programme, but had unfortunately forgotten all about it until just before the meeting. He accordingly turned up prepared to play some of the records that happened to be in the back of the three-wheeler. Fortunately, the Chairman had brought along an HMV Model 32, a machine introduced in 1927 and incorporating the then current No. 4 soundbox and swan-neck tone-arm in conjunction with the traditional 'Morning Glory' horn. With the aid of this, Roger gave a short but entertaining programme

of records. These included examples by Ted Lewis, Jack Hylton, Gilly Potter and Aimee Semple McPherson, an innocent-sounding American evangelist who, Roger informed us, later fell from grace when the temptations of the flesh proved too great. She had this particular congregation rolling in the aisles, and one member showed his appreciation by buying the record afterwards.

These meetings are proving most enjoyable, and the first Friday in the month should be a permanent date in the diaries of all members in the South-East, particularly those within easy reach of Chipstead.

Christopher Proudfoot.

CORRESPONDENCE

[REDACTED]
Plymouth,
Devon.

Dear Mr. Brott,

I should like to add some notes to the subject of film soundtrack recordings, discussed in the June "Hillandale News".

As a student of dance music - of necessity chiefly on records - one can hardly ignore the importance of dance films, and the differences between the recorded output of the two media make interesting comparisons. When sound films became established, Hollywood went "musical-mad" (1929 remains the year of peak output), so naturally, composers, arrangers and instrumentalists were in great demand by the studios. This meant that many musicians who had previously been involved in records, wireless, dance halls and hotel ballrooms, concentrated wholly on film music. The "big five" studios, led by Warner Bros., began in the early 30s, long series of film musicals, mostly with original dance tunes.

I am of the opinion that, apart from the matter of length and copyright problems, there were other good reasons why very little film soundtrack material was available on records in the thirties. Firstly, many musical sequences had noises, such as footsteps or talking, which while fitting in dramatically with the film, would have been meaningless or tiresome on record. Secondly, the sound recording quality of many films up to about 1936 would have been unacceptable on disc. Even the early R.K.O. musicals, with access to the R.C.A. Victor recording expertise, had woefully distorted orchestral passages.

Thirdly, I feel that many of the films' musical arrangements would have been unsuitable without the pictures. The studios did everything on a big scale, and their orchestras were no exception. The massed strings, particularly, gave a sound which would have seemed syrupy and muddy to the dance music fan used to the tightly-knit sound of a dance band with say fourteen musicians (a typical number). Take the musical score from a lavish Hollywood musical, for example, which featured scenes of fifty chorines playing neon-silhouetted violins, tap-dancing on aeroplanes in flight, and diving into floodlit fountains. Without the pictures, the music would have sounded just silly.

The record companies were alive to the popularity of film music, even though they did not issue soundtrack recordings. There can be few dance bands that did not record, for example, selections from "Fox Movietone Follies of 1929" or "The King of Jazz". Often a star would make such a hit with a number in a film, that record companies felt it essential to make a recording with the original vocalist to capitalise on the film success. Generally the record companies would have the star accompanied by their own house orchestra (e.g. Jeannette Macdonald with Nat Shilkret on Victor, or Jack Buchanan with Ray Noble on HMV). On other occasions they would have the star accompanied by an already-famous dance band (which just happened to be under contract to that company at the time!) such as Al Jolson with Isham Jones on Brunswick or Fred Astaire with Leo Reisman on Victor-HMV.

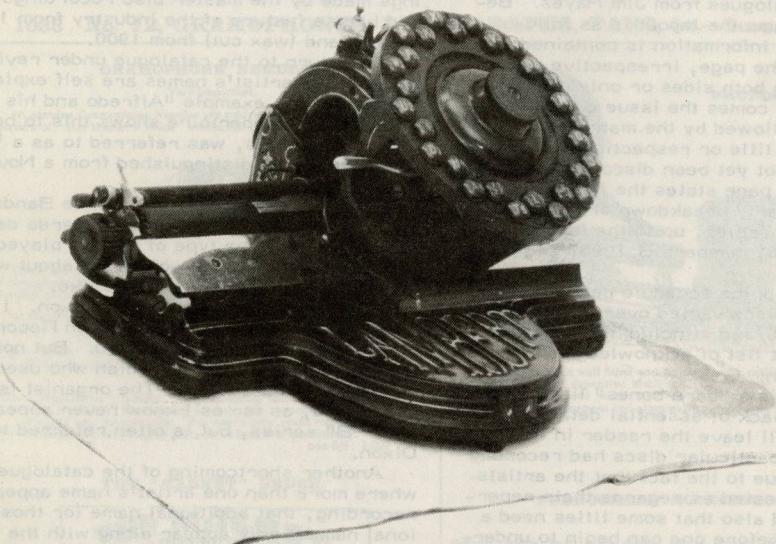
One company, however, did make a notable

attempt to reconcile the incompatible features of soundtrack and disc recording, this was Columbia, with Louis Levy. This accomplished musician was musical director of Gaumont-British (with Gainsborough) from 1928 to 1948, and subsequently of Associated British Pathé. G-B was the major British studio in the thirties, and Louis Levy made many film selection recordings for Columbia with his "Gaumont-British Symphony", and later for HMV. He used dance band vocalists such as Eve Becke and Brian Lawrence rather than the film stars, and the records are today much prized by collectors for their orchestral arrangements. These were characterized by the

large string section (Mantovani-style) which gave the authentic "film" sound, but with the difference that this would be background to a quite small dance band playing with great precision. This style of arrangement was, as far as I am aware, unique.

For those interested in musical film soundtracks, I can strongly recommend the two LPs produced by United Artists of the Warner Bros. Busby Berkeley musicals, entitled "The Golden Age of the Hollywood Musical" (UAG 29421) and "Hooray for Hollywood" (UAG 29644).

Paul Collenette.



Lambert Typewriter, by the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd.,

circa 1904, with instruction booklet

(Included in August 7th sale at Christies, South Kensington)

 "HIS MASTER'S VOICE" 10" DISCS CATALOGUED
 SERIES : B. 8,000 and onwards
 ARRANGEMENT : Alphabetical Order of Artists
 (Review by Frank Andrews)

The above catalogue has been compiled and published by Jim Hayes of 161, Bowland Drive, Ford, Liverpool, England at a price of £1-23p. inc. P. & P. for U.K. residents.

The catalogue is printed in a loose-leaf format with the information on one side of the sheets only, which information consists of the barest information presented in a similar fashion to that used in earlier catalogues from Jim Hayes. Below each artist's name the layout is as follows. (For each disc, the information is contained all in one line across the page, irrespective of whether the artist is on both sides or only one of the sides). Firstly comes the issue date, then the "B" number, followed by the matrix, or matrices, and then the title or respective titles. All matrices have not yet been discovered.

An introductory page states the life period of the series and a yearly breakdown of the progressing numerical series, up to the last two discs issued in 1958, numbers B. 10967 and B. 10968.

There is also a price schedule detailing how the price of these discs varied over the years between 2/6d. and 6/3½d. (including tax) each.

There is a short list of acknowledgments for assistance given.

As stated, this is a "bare bones" listing, and in my opinion, the lack of essential details, in many instances, will leave the reader in ignorance of what some particular discs had recorded on them. This is due to the fact that the artists have not been delineated as regards their repertoire category, and also that some titles need a composer's name, before one can begin to understand what piece of music has been recorded. Although there is an Artists' Page Index included, this also fails to state what type of performance the artists have recorded.

Thus, the first artist is Essie Ackland. If you have never heard of Essie Ackland, then you will have to guess, from the contents of her repertoire whether she is an instrumentalist, a singer, or whatever else seems likely. Having guessed correctly that she is a singer, then you are left wondering whether she is a soprano or a contralto. She happened to be a contralto.

Next we come to Larry Adler, but there is no guarantee that it is THE Larry Adler, the highly skilled reed harmonica player (mouth-organ).

Next comes Tony Alamo (one disc). Who was he? I have never heard of him. From the contents he was probably a singer or a vocalist.

By the way, both the Adler and the Alamo discs are post-1948/9 and were therefore probably made from master tape recordings. Except for "Actual Recordings - on the spot", my interest in disc records finishes with the last recordings made by the master disc recordings, which had been a feature of the industry from 1890 (acid etched) and (wax cut) from 1900.

To return to the catalogue under review. Some of the artist's names are self explanatory of course, for example "Alfredo and his Orchestra", and the repertoire shows this to be what, in my young days, was referred to as a "Light Orchestra", as distinguished from a Novelty or Dance Orchestra.

The next two artists are Dance Bands, but the most essential information as regards dance music is missing, the type of rhythm played is not mentioned, one is left wondering about waltzes, fox-trots, quick-steps and the like.

Further on we come to Reg Dixon. I asked my wife, "What does Reg Dixon do on Recordings?" "Plays the organ," she replied. But not this Reg Dixon, he is the light comedian who used to be billed "Confidentially". The organist is Reginald Dixon who, as far as I know never appeared in the HMV "B" series, but is often referred to as Reg Dixon.

Another shortcoming of the catalogue is that where more than one artist's name appears on a recording, that additional name (or those additional names) only appear along with the first named artist, and do not appear again under their own initials in the alphabetical sequence of Artists, thus Marion Bell, George Dixon, John Mills, "Blossom", John Rutland, and many others, can only be found by looking under the names of those with whom they collaborated when making their records.

No conductors, choir or band masters have been named, and where opera arias form the contents of the recordings, neither the opera, nor the composer has been given.

Under Evelyn Rothwell and Wilfrid Parry, we have "Sonata in C Major" parts 1 and 2. Can you say what piece of music you would expect to hear, and can you say on what instruments you would ex-

pect the work to be performed?

It is in fact a work by Loeillet, arranged by Evelyn Rothwell (Lady Barbirolli), for oboe and piano. Unless one was particularly interested in woodwind playing, I suggest it would be highly unlikely for anyone to have known that that was the work referred to. As it stands, B.10291's entry tells a reader practically nothing.

Semprini (pianist) is another artist who has a number of records which need a composer identification before one can be sure which piece of music had been recorded.

I fail to understand how Jim Hayes can persist

in failing to give even this basic information; he has the information but chooses to withhold it from his customers. Damn it, if you buy a catalogue of records one is expected to know what is being performed on the records listed!

Having said all this, at £1-23p. this catalogue is still worth the money, especially for those whose interest lies with the dance bands and orchestras and the "personality" artists such as Dinah Shore, Maxine Sullivan, "Fats" Waller, Tony Martin, Noel Coward, Maurice Chevalier, etc. etc. and without any shadow of doubt, Jim Hayes has put an immense amount of effort into this production which is the only and first listing of the HMV "B" 8,000 series.

1038 No. 12, GRAMOPHONES, PHONOGRAPHS, FANS, &c.—Second Floor.

GRAMOPHONE NEEDLES.

Very important.

All genuine Gramophone Needles are sold in metal boxes, with coloured picture of "His Master's Voice" on the lid.



There are three kinds of genuine Gramophone Needles. Only genuine Gramophone Needles should be used to play Gramophone Records. Cheap needles cut the sound waves and ruin Gramophone Records.

The Gramophone Needle. A red metal box holding 200 Needles
box 0/9; 1,000 3/0

The "Melba" Gramophone Needle. A mauve metal box holding
200 Compressed Steel Needles. Every point examined
box 1/6; 1,000 7/6

The "Pianissimo" Needle. A green metal box holding 200 Soft
Tone Needles. Eliminating scratch, but reducing the volume
of sound very considerably. For use in very small rooms, or for
students who wish to play parts of records over continually.
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THE "MAGNET" BRUSH.



Will prolong the life of your Records. It draws out the most minute particles of steel dust or grit, thereby giving a clearer and sweeter tone to the Records, besides greatly reducing the scratching.

Each 2/0

PHONOGRAPHS.



This Phonograph is well fitted and finished, and equal in many respects to some of the more expensive machines sold by other makers. Mounted on highly finished wood stand, and wood cover is also included. Well finished aluminium trumpet and aluminium reproducer, and can be wound while playing.

Each 30/0

PHONOGRAPH ACCESSORIES.

Records (extra loud, high speed), bands, songs, instrumental,
solos, &c. each 0/10

Plain cylinders for making records on 0/6

The Records are in no circumstances sent out on approval,
therefore cannot be exchanged.

Members are informed that records for the phonographs being very
fragile, the Society does not accept any responsibility for their safety in
transit.

From the Army and Navy Stores
Catalogue of 1907.

***** THE 9,000 SERIES OF COLUMBIA 12" DISCS *****

This is not another appeal, the well laid out schedule in the June Issue of Hillandale News relieved me of making another. But due to the kind co-operation of Members and readers of the Talking Machine Review, the following records' matrices are now known and can be marked off the lists on pages 342 and 343 in June's issue.

Reading down the page 9358, 9182, 9031, 9315/6/7, 9026, 9209, 9164, 9033, 9266, 9462, 9223.

***** COLUMBIA ELECTRICAL RE-RECORDINGS, 12" diams. *****

As most collectors will know who have had a number of Columbia records pass through their hands, one occasionally comes across discs with the letter "R" as a suffix to the catalogue number. These were electrical re-recordings of items that had been in the Columbia catalogues for a number of years and had been retained presumably because they were steady sellers. With the new electrical process of recording coming in in late 1925, many of these "standards" were re-recorded during the next two years, generally with fresh artists. Many of the original acoustic recordings began their existence as Rena Double Face Records in the original Rena Manufacturing Co. Ltd.'s catalogue.

I believe we know how many 12" acoustic Columbia and Rena records were re-recorded electrically and I append the following list in the hope that some of you may be able to provide me with the matrices, which in every case should be prefixed with a "W", indicating the Western Electric Company's sound system of recording. We have not yet appealed for the acoustic matrices in the series from which these "electrics" form part, so should you have the acoustic matrices for the original issues, these would be welcome too.

Matrices are wanted for recordings by The Royal Guards Band on 105R, 106R, 108R, 117R, 189R. Grenadier Guards Band - 107R, 200R, 508R, 513R, 516R, 576R, 582R, 587R, 625R,

626R, 744R, 927R, 939R, Violin, Flute & Harp Trio: 127R, 306R. Guisepi di Sylva, 'cello: 208R. Court Symphony Orchestra: 244R, 306R, 968R, 979R, 984R, 986R, 987R, 992R, 993R, 994R, 997R. Grenadier Guards Band: 999R. Carrie Herwin: 301R, 343R, 794R. Bransby Williams: 348R, 388R. Union Symphony Orchestra: 597R. Heddle Nash: 830R. Arthur Jordan: 840R. BBC Wireless Symphony Orchestra: 901R. Muriel Brunskill: 917R. Francis Russell/Harold Williams: 924R. National Military Band: 928R.

There were a few records, early ones, in the 9,000 series which were electrically re-recorded. We need the "W" prefixed numbers for the following: National Military Band: 9014R. Rex Palmer: 9017R. Grenadier Guards Band: 9039R, 9040R, 9042R, 9015R, 9065R. "1925" Orch/Mackey: 9062R, Columbia Vocal Gems Company: 9067R, 9072R. BBC Wireless Symphony Orchestra/Pitt 9076R.

N.B. The "W" prefix may be indicated simply by a "W" enclosed within a circle marked somewhere in the shellac surrounding the label.

Please submit all information to me, Frank Andrews, [REDACTED], N.W. 10.

Thanking you in anticipation, my friends. And may I also thank an Australian correspondent for his submission, whose letter I seem to have mislaid for the moment and whose name I have forgotten. "Thank you, Cobber".

We hear from the GRAMOPHONE magazine that from September there will be facilities for advertising under a VETERAN & VINTAGE classification. This will be good news for collectors, who have noticed phonographs and cabinet gramophones mixed up with modern sophisticated equipment. The rates will be 8p. per word (private) and 13p. (trade). Application should be made to General Gramophone Publications, Ltd., 177-179, Kenton Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 0HA.

BASS RESPONSE
*****by UBIQUE

I am indebted to Peter Adamson of St. Andrews on two counts for his letter in the June HILLANDALE NEWS, replying to my columnar assertion that we are not getting value for money with today's LP records. Firstly, that he should have taken the trouble to analyse the recording techniques used on an LP record, and secondly for actually reading this column, which I never thought anybody did; indeed I feel so gratified that in future I have promised the Editor so much that not only will it fill HILLANDALE NEWS but both sides of the covers as well. While not wanting to prolong the topic, two records have come out that underline my point perfectly. In January 1954 the late Erich Kleiber's Concertgebouw Orchestra recording of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony was issued on Decca LXT 2851, a particularly striking recording that was favoured by the hi-fi addicts of the day to show off their rather dry-sounding equipment. Now, 21 years after, Kleiber's son Carlos conducts the same symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on DG 2530-516, and still covering both sides of the record. I can go out and buy very respectable recordings of the same symphony that occupy only one side, and we are still being given short measure at high price, in Carlos Kleiber's case just short of £3. In the opposite direction a record was issued in June of Kalman's "Gipsy Princess", which offered virtually all the music of this operetta on one record lasting 68 minutes and costing under £1. An oldish recording I don't doubt, transferred at a lower level maybe, but just good value; I don't think I always want my ears assailed at a high level, as they've heard better days and still have a long time ahead, I hope. Surely the core of the matter is that we are only too easily parted from our money without shopping around and querying values. If we were to resist the impulse to buy on the first issue, the record would reappear in most cases on a bargain label. I still think 16 rpm should have been retained for the spoken word other than 'talking books', but it is too late because this speed has disappeared from so many modern playing desks.

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I have been reading the autobiography of Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, "A Life of Song" (O.U.P. 1929); it was she of course who col-

lected so many of the crofter songs of the Western Islands of Scotland just in time to save a lot of them from being lost for ever. Unlike others who cycled round notating folk songs - Cecil Sharp and Percy Grainger spring readily to mind - Marjory Kennedy-Fraser carried with her a Graphophone and a supply of blank cylinders, boating from island to island, moving from 'black house' to 'black house' and through bog and bracken. On each cylinder she could record as many as three Gaelic songs which were later transcribed, translated as necessary and a piano setting devised. These were eventually published in three volumes by Boosey, entitled "Songs of the Hebrides", and a fourth volume "From the Hebrides" was published in Scotland. The type of Graphophone was not specified, except that in 1907 it was 'very small and easily portable'. The narrative leads us to believe that she had made recordings earlier than this date; the machine had an aluminium horn, however, and may well have been an AT, BS or one of the Q's. When the machine was mentioned for the last time in Barra in 1923 it was described as being heavy, so a larger model may have been in use; recordings were still being made at this date, standard blanks may well have not been sold by then, but a six-inch mandrel model could have accommodated an office cylinder, so one of the larger Graphophones might well have been used. This is purely guess work of course. There had been others who had earlier carried Graphophones and Edison machines through jungle and across desert and ice to record tribal sounds but next time we hear one of Kennedy-Fraser's Hebridean song arrangements - "The Eriskay Love-lilt" or "Kishmul's Galley" for instance - she should be remembered as perhaps the first person to record such songs for posterity and for giving pleasure; these were not solely for academic and ethnic study.

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Another British musician who wrote an entertaining biography was Sir Dan Godfrey, and his "Memories and Music" (Hutchinson 1924) comes to hand fairly easily from the secondhand shelves. It covers his life in music, starting in South Africa in 1891 in the ramshackle theatres of the booming gold and diamond towns up to the founding and conducting of what became The Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, an orchestra which in spite of

name changes and financial crises has today a national reputation. This protracted introduction leads me to the point that Sir Dan Godfrey's old Bournemouth Pavilion Orchestra library has been recently acquired by the administrator of Philomusica, and that its lighter content will be revealed in a July concert in Holland Park Court Theatre. May one hope that this contributes to a re-awakening of interest in Victorian and Edwardian composers of light music; we can still hear this music today on the earlier records, but with the extinction of palm court and restaurant orchestras, light offerings of this period are so rarely heard live, and a generation or two has grown up that knows nothing of it but will sometimes dismiss it as 'tea-shop music' without ever having stepped into a real

tea-shop anyhow. The Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, among many, made quite a number of Columbia (and Regal) records of this light music, and these are not hard to find. Godfrey was always an experimenter and among the standard overtures offered xylophone duets, piccolo duets, flute duets and strings played with quills! Light music is a personal predilection - as is the heavy stuff - and lots of other kinds as well, but if there are any readers who want to know more about it, may I draw their attention to the Vintage Light Music Society in the advertisement pages. Its chairman Stuart Upton, is giving the London Society a programme on light music for the September 13th meeting.

THE ACTIONS OF OUR MEMBERS

by George L. Frow

Gordon Bromly, who was our Treasurer for several years, is known to many of us as the Chairman of the Recorded Vocal Art Society, and has passed me that Society's programme for the coming winter. Record Recitals are given twice a month in London, and several well-known characters in the singing and record worlds are presenting programmes. If you like opera and song, and can attend, details are available from [REDACTED] West Wickham, Kent, BR4 0HB.

It is always good to hear of members who can produce spares or offer a service, and I have recently examined several examples of phonograph horns made by one in Somerset. Particularly outstanding down to the last detail were 8-panelled FIRESIDE and GEM horns, 19 in. in length and finished in rich maroon or black; the gilt lines and "transfer" are accurately hand-painted. The price at £17 apiece sounds high, but each horn has to be individually built and finished and this takes a week. Cranes for these may be obtained through the Society. If you have a FIRESIDE or GEM lacking the correct horn, and would like to give the machine a real face-lift, please write direct to: G. Fudge, [REDACTED], Bridgwater, Somerset. He also makes small wooden

horns to his own design for phonographs.

Michael Walters, c/o The British Museum (Natural History), Tring, Herts, is a contributor to this magazine, and a knowledgeable writer on Gilbert and Sullivan, performed or recorded. He publishes a Newsletter of G & B and related matters, at monthly intervals, and invites all interested to send for copies. There is no charge, but postage and a contribution towards duplicating costs are only right. There are articles on singers with G & S connections and critical notes on amateur and professional productions in this country.

A British member has asked if anyone knows the whereabouts of a Leon Scott PHONAUTOGRAPH, which can be begged, bought, borrowed, copied, or merely looked at in a museum. It will be remembered that Scott's PHONAUTOGRAPH, with its membrane, hog-bristle, and revolving cylinder coated with lamp-black was an early machine for demonstrating the patterns of sound, and it is possible that one may be lingering at the back of a cupboard in a physics laboratory. This is a genuine request, and if you can help, please write to me and I will forward letters. All your letters will be acknowledged.

 * CORRESPONDENCE *

Dear Mr. Editor,

The reference to gramophone records in ancient China in the article "A hundred years of recorded sound" raises one or two interesting points.

Firstly, I wonder if there may not have been some confusion. Jade discs with holes in the centre shaped exactly like gramophone records are well known from early times in China, and I gather thin discs of other substances with concentric grooves like a gramophone record have been found in excavations. Their purpose was apparently unknown. The Chinese are also known, of course, to have produced mechanical sets of pealed bells which produced tunes of their own volition, rather like a primitive musical box.

On the other hand, the possibility that recorded sound was known in ancient China should not be discounted. A number of books have been written in recent years attempting to prove that the human race originated in outer space or was visited in ancient times by extra-terrestrial beings. Part of the "evidence" for this is based on the finding of various "modern inventions" in ancient excavations at a period when knowledge of their uses would appear to have been impossible to a people at that stage of sub-civilisation. Evidence is also put forward for the knowledge of various sciences in the ancient world which knowledge was apparently lost for centuries to be subsequently rediscovered. There does, in fact, seem to be a more logical possibility to explain this than that it was taught to the ancients by creatures from other worlds.

The Pleistocene Era or Great Ice Age consisted of 4 or 5 ice ages, separated by interglacial periods, during which conditions were much as they are today. It is conceivable that at least some of the humans living at the time had

reached a high level of civilisation in the last interglacial period, which civilisation was destroyed by the advance of the ice. In such a case, it would be quite likely that small numbers of the educated beings survived in little pockets here and there and as the ice receded again, mixed and mingled with the advancing primitive peoples. These sages would have filled the roles of sorcerers and magicians and would have possessed "ancient knowledge" which the less developed peoples may have used but did not understand. Eventually these people died out and their knowledge with them. It is not impossible that one of these pieces of knowledge may have been the recording of voices.

This brings up another point. It is confidently predicted that the Great Ice Age is not over; that we are living in what is merely an interglacial period; and that in a few thousand years the ice will start to advance again. If one civilisation has been destroyed by ice can it not happen again? Is our civilisation so secure that it will endure against all odds? The past history of the last two thousand years is riddled with tragedies of the destruction of libraries and other repositories of priceless and irreplaceable learning. What is to become of the rich collections of voices trapped in shellac which members have painstakingly collected over the years? In less than a hundred years the output has been tremendous - and an enormous quantity of it has apparently already disappeared. A great deal more of it is probably doomed to disappear before all the piles of shellac still adorning second hand shops finally disappears into specialist collections. Can any reader suggest a means whereby we can ensure that the cumbersome and vulnerable collections of historical evidence can be preserved for future generations?

Yours sincerely,
 Michael P. Walters.

RECORD MAKING OUTFIT

The Kingston Home Recorder, Tested and described.

Reproduction of an Article dated January 28th, 1931.

A new development is now taking place in the form of home recording, so that the radio-gramophone not only serves as a source of entertainment from broadcast or record, but provides a means for making records of items from the broadcast programme. The process of recording being well known, one might think that the making of a home record making outfit would be a simple matter. This is not the case, however, as there are many practical problems to solve. The first popular home record making equipment has now made its appearance on the market and, known as the "Kingston Home Recorder", is being supplied by The Kingsthophone Co. Ltd., 91, Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1. In spite of the fact that it is a first model there is much evidence that the design has been carefully developed before setting about production.

The entire assembly is made up from castings, pressings and small turned parts, is generously designed, and exceedingly well finished. It is obvious from the design that it is the intention of the manufacturers to go ahead with the production of a large number of home recorders. Primarily, the outfit in its simplest form is intended for making records from speech delivered into a mouth-piece arranged as a horn. The sound is conveyed on to a light aluminium diaphragm, suitably stiffened and adjusted by several annular corrugations. At the centre of the diaphragm a lever is attached which, mounted between adjustable centres, carries a cutting needle at its opposite end. Thus, the sound waves actuate the diaphragm, giving a movement to the lever, which, in turn, vibrates the cutting stylus. The recorder is carried on a pivoted arm free to swing across the record and arranged for lifting clear of the surface. There is a heavy adjustable counterweight which allows of critical adjustment of the pressure of the cutting point on the record. In addition, a second needle point is provided, this being used as a guide in order that the recorder may traverse the record.

In this respect a very simple and effective method is adopted for giving both a traverse to the recorder and a drive for the record with avoidance of slip. The arrangement consists of a 10in. record carrying a plain spiral, in which the guide point travels. Locked on to the centre of the record by the simple process of engaging on to three studs is the blank aluminium disc upon which the record is to be made. A positive drive



The "acoustic" recording outfit with mouth-piece fitted to a portable gramophone.

is thus obtained under the cutting load of the stylus, while the spiral imparts a cross-movement to the recorder. The spiral on the record plate gives a cross-traverse in respect of some 200 revolutions of the turntable, so that at normal running speed the playing duration is just over two minutes.

Used with a Clockwork Motor.

It is well known that the process of record making normally demands a gramophone motor of generous power in order to avoid a severe slowing up of the turntable when cutting the groove. With the Kingston recorder the aim has been to produce an outfit suitable for use with the ordinary gramophone fitted, possibly, with but a meagre type of gramophone motor. That this has been achieved is revealed by the public demonstrations which are being given at 245, Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1, where the recording is carried out on a small portable gramophone. In order to accomplish home recording on a gramophone fitted with a small clockwork motor critical adjustment of the balance weight fitted to the arm is necessary, and the various tests made with the recorder were carried out using an electrically driven turntable.

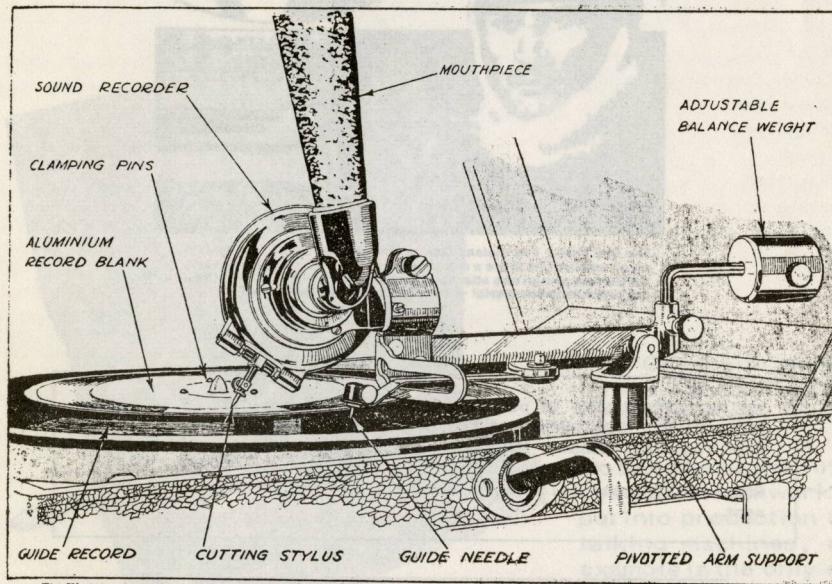
The process of recording had no appreciable retarding effect, and, in fact, when one came to the recording of broadcast transmissions with an electrical recorder an additional weight was attached to increase the pressure on the record, in spite of the fact that the electrical recorder, with its permanent magnet, is much heavier than the direct sound recorder with its trumpet. Much of the weight is, however, taken by the guide point resting in the spiral, and an increase of pressure is not entirely added to the recorder.

A very interesting evening can be spent making records by speaking or singing into the small trumpet. One must not expect to obtain results comparable with the ordinary record, but nevertheless, speech and music are clear and sufficiently loud, and from a novelty standpoint the result is quite entertaining. Special needles are provided both for tracking and cutting, whilst a fibre needle must be used for playing, and it is important to keep a good point on the fibre needle in order that it may follow the groove. Detailed instructions are given for recording and playing dealing with the little difficulties which one encounters when starting off.

It is thought, however, that the principal application of home recording is that of using the electrical recorder connected to the output

terminals of the wireless set for making recordings of broadcast transmissions. Really good results can be obtained by following the instructions and carefully regulating the pressure on the cutting point at the time of recording. Some experience is necessary in order to get just the right depth of cut in relation to the strength of signal applied to the recorder. Too loud a signal will prevent the playing back of the record, as the needle cannot follow the spiral and successive grooves will overlap. Insufficient pressure will make too light a groove for the fibre needle to follow. It is surprising what good results can be obtained from broadcast transmissions when playing back with a sharp fibre needle. Blank records are supplied suitably etched at the centre for making various entries of the item recorded. The outfit is reasonable in price and costs 45s. for the acoustic model or £3. 16s. 6d. for the electrical recording equipment. The electrical recorder may be used as a pick-up.

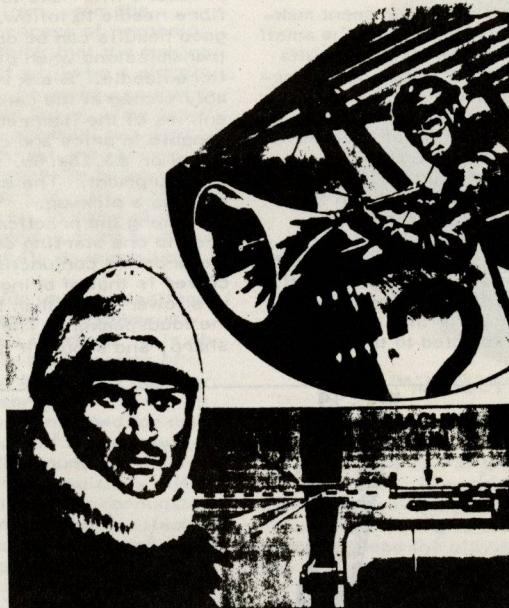
Among the practical hints that might be offered to one starting off to use the Kingston Home Recorder in conjunction with the broadcast receiver is that of bringing down the signal strength to a lower value than is customarily applied to the loudspeaker. The recording needle must be sharp, and should it have become accidentally



The Kingston acoustic recorder. The electrical recorder is similar in appearance and construction to a gramophone pick-up.

damaged the substitution of a new and sharply pointed needle is essential. Additional weight on the pick-up is also probably an advantage. Should the guide groove become accidentally damaged the guide plate should be discarded, as every record made will bear evidence of the broken spiral. The gramophone on which the records are replayed must be level excepting, perhaps, when the tone arm is incorrectly

mounted, when a slight tilt will assist the point of the needle in following the groove. Of the packet of twelve blank records supplied with the outfit the last six used represent quite good recordings of broadcast items, each giving results when replayed like normal gramophone records, though not quite so loud, while care is necessary in playing them.



The first fighter ace, Roland Garros, and the deflector plate system which enabled him to fire a machine gun through the propeller. Inset is the German airman who attached a gramophone horn to his rifle. It was not particularly successful — but it did scare his opponents!

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